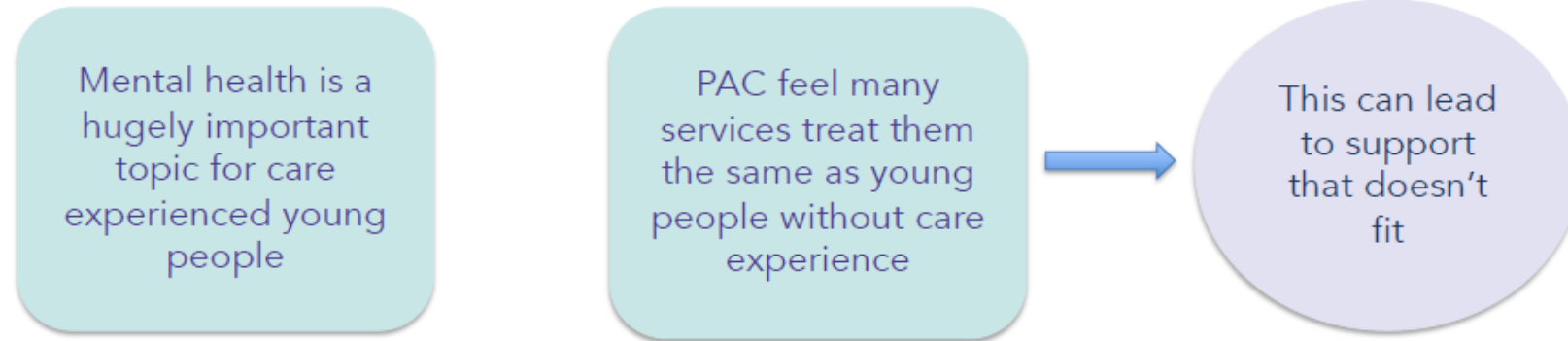




Mental Health Research  
IJB Public Engagement Committee  
16 November 2022

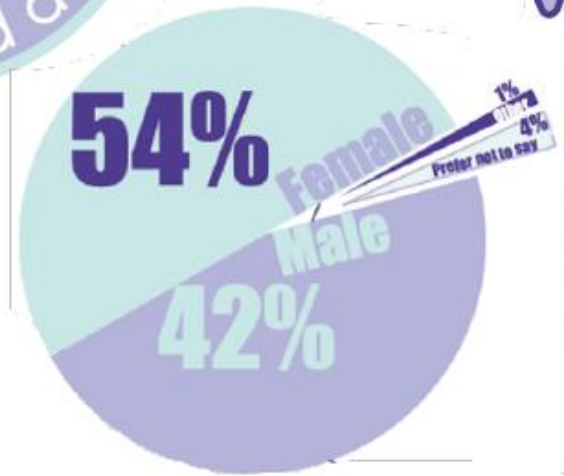
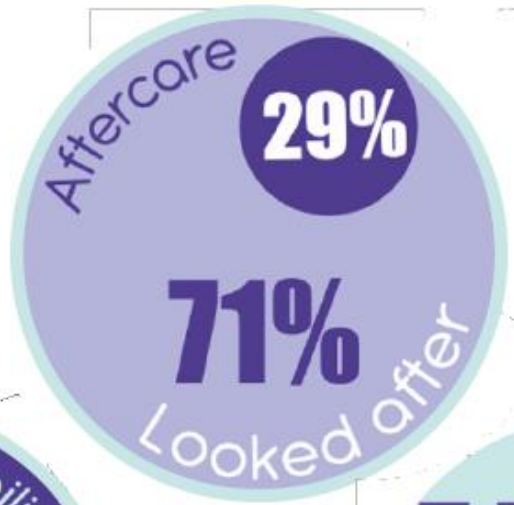
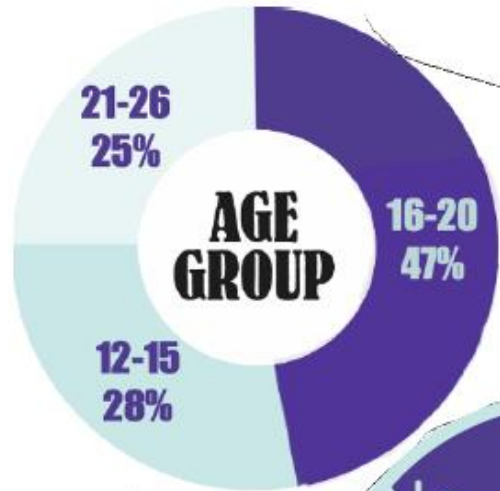
# Research Requirement



PAC wanted to find out how mental health services could better support people like them, by understanding the challenges care experienced young people face when seeking mental health support

# Sample

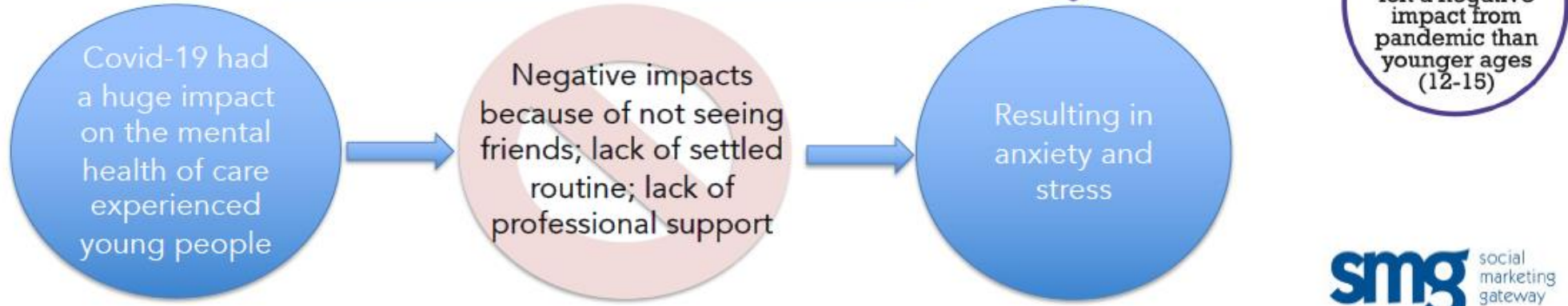
143 young people participated – with 5 taking part in both research elements



# Current State of YP's Mental Health



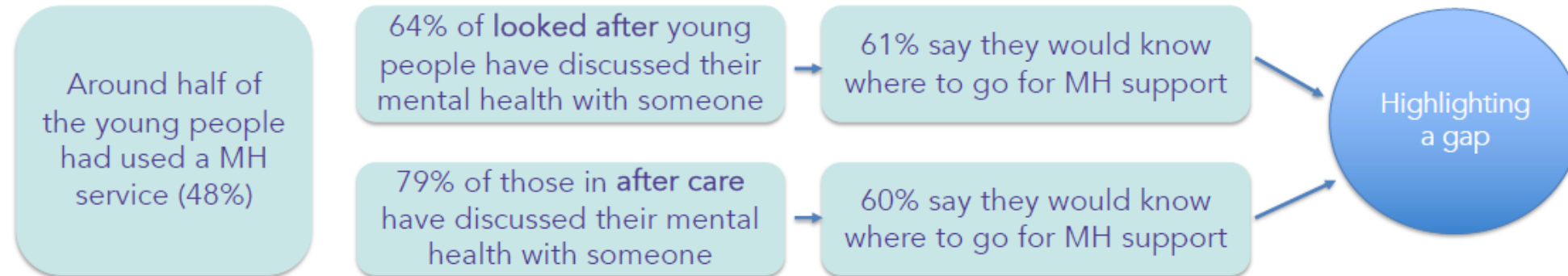
## The Covid-19 Impact



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# Experience of Mental Health Support



Of **looked after** young people that had used a service...

- 36% did not feel better after engaging
- 36% did not get help when they needed it
- 33% did not find it easy to talk to services
- 29% did not find it easy to get information
- 24% did not get the right information / support
- 19% did not find the services helpful

Of young people in **after care** that had used a service...

- 52% did not get the right information / support
- 48% did not get help when they needed it
- 44% did not find it easy to talk to services
- 40% did not feel better after engaging
- 40% did not find the services helpful
- 28% did not find it easy to get information

social marketing gateway

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# Barriers to Accessing Support

Practical and emotional barriers are stopping care experienced young people from getting mental health support



## Practical

- Unsure where to go for support / who to talk to to find out
- Long waiting times
- Believing they are not entitled to support – i.e. it's for people who are 'worse off'
- Lack of mental health diagnosis
- Being overlooked by professionals because of 'less severe' problems

## Emotional



- Difficulty communicating problems with professionals
- Reluctance to rely on others
- Social anxiety
- Fear of being judged / disbelieved
- Poor previous experience of services
- Professionals not understanding the specific nuances of being care experienced – resulting in generic treatment and lack of trust
- Worries about impacts on life caused by 'opening up'

# What do they want?

Participants had a number of recommendations on what they want and need to strengthen mental health support and personally help them to manage their mental health better



Every recommendation in the report came directly from a care experienced young person



- ✓ Quick and easy access to services → Immediate info on where to go to get help right away, in a variety of methods
- ✓ Active support to engage with services → Frequent reminders from professionals – not relying on passive comms
- ✓ Support for all levels of mental health → Not just the most severe or urgent cases, with a focus on prevention
- ✓ Demand-led support → Including different methods of engagement & listening to the young person
- ✓ Consistent / frequent mental health check-ups → To overcome stigma, focus on prevention, ensure no one is missed and take the 'onus' off YP
- ✓ Specialist, independent mental health support → Separate from staff and social workers they already know to mitigate worries about wider impacts
- ✓ Professionals educated on their specific needs → Avoiding generic advice / perceived lack of empathy
- ✓ Phased return of f2f contact → The preferred method for many
- ✓ Facilitate smoother transition from care to aftercare, and children's to adults' services → As transitions can be key points where mental health worsens



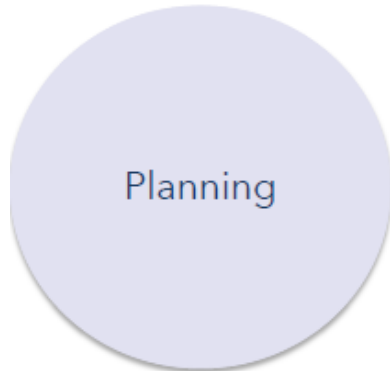
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# PAC's Involvement

Despite a number of challenges around the Covid-19 pandemic, delays to the research, and PAC formally finishing, more than half of PAC members contributed to this research



Highlighting their commitment, passion, and enthusiasm for this research



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# Summary

Many care experienced young people suffer from poor mental health and the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated this

"Older" young people – e.g. 21-26 year olds – are particularly at risk of mental health concerns

Practical and emotional barriers are at play when they think about seeking help

Care experienced young people could be better supported with their mental health in a range of ways

Giving them a voice and understanding their specific experiences is the only way to provide truly valuable support

Care experienced young people need services to understand how their experiences differ from other young people

A clear distinction between support given by social workers / support workers / children's centre staff etc. and MH support strongly called for

Care experienced young people want independent and expert mental health professionals to be trained in engaging with them specifically, and work with them consistently to build a strong relationship

...and they want this to be provided, as standard, for all care experienced young people, to help overcome stigma, focus on prevention, and ensure no young person is overlooked

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## Young people's views about being involved in the PAC Mental Health Research

This is awesome getting to be part of this, it is a big deal

"The conversations on Microsoft teams have been good and good information."

I am here because I have mental health

It is pretty awesome to be involved in this research.

I want to help with the group discussions, I think that would be great."

I am so glad that I got you to help me with the PAC survey

The survey was easy to follow, and it didn't take long to do

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## Call for Action – a letter from PAC

“What is important is that all 10 research recommendations can be progressed to make a difference to the mental health of all care experienced young people and we need your help to do that.

- What can you do individually to progress the recommendations?
- What can you do within your own organisation to progress the recommendations?
- What can you do in partnership with others to progress the recommendations?
- What commitment can you give to PAC to progress these recommendations?

After the past 2 years, the mental health research has never been more important. We really need to have hope that mental health services and care experienced young people’s health can improve. Please help to make something happen soon as many young people’s lives are on hold while they are trying to cope with trauma and wait for services to become available.

Please can we ask you to share the mental health research with your colleagues and networks, so it reaches a wide audience”

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